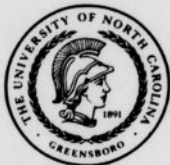


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This paper represents my attempt to link two important forces in Hemingway, death and primitivism, and to trace their logical development into the cult of the bullring.

In a world that had obtained a temporary peace, it was only in Spain and in bullfighting that Hemingway's obsession with death could find the arena that would provide the spectacle of man's domination of death through courage.

A primitive view of death too became an obsession, even a compulsive ritual, for Hemingway. Hemingway's constant theme of wounding and death was a direct result, I argue, of the trauma produced by his terrible wounding in Italy; the trauma that brought about a regression or primitivization of behavior; the trauma that produced a compulsion to live again the scenes of wounding and death. Under these circumstances, we learn that, in the case of compulsive neurotics, primitive ritual becomes the means of holding onto reality and keeping the dark forces under control.

The cult of the bullring provides the ideal arena for the compulsive acting out of primitive ritual. Hemingway reveals in his infatuation with the cult his close alliance

with archetypal thought patterns latent in the cult of the bullring. These archetypal thought patterns based upon primitive modes of behavior were to result in his close association with the archetypes of ancient religion such as totemism, homeopathic magic, and taboo.

By tracing these concepts of ancient religions in Hemingway's works I have endeavored to portray how a mind wounded by trauma has tried to build a psychic shelter against the world by taking refuge in the magic of ancient religion underlying the cult of the bullring.

A Thesis Submitted to
the Faculty of the Graduate School of
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Approved by

Robert W. Kaplan
Thesis Advisor

HEMINGWAY'S RELIGION OF DEATH--

THE CULT OF THE BULLRING

by

Garrison S. Hupp

A Thesis Submitted to
the Faculty of the Graduate School at
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I wish to acknowledge my appreciation to my thesis adviser, Professor R. O. Stephens. Whatever merits this paper may possess are due to a large part to his perception and insight into Hemingway and his works.

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¹ Sean O'Faolain, "The End of a Good Man," *Literature of the World*, eds. Thomas G. Jones et al. (New York: Random House, 1961), 58.

² George Blumenthal, "Interview with Ernest Hemingway," *Hemingway and His Trifles*, ed. Carlton Fagan (New York: William and Wang, 1961), 54.

CHAPTER I

HEMINGWAY AND DEATH

"Men who go into competition with the world are broken into fragments by the world, and it is such men we love to analyze. But men who do not go into competition with the world remain intact, and these men we cannot analyze."¹

In his now famous interview with George Plimpton of the Paris Review in 1958, Ernest Hemingway restated his iceberg theory of writing: "If it is any use to know it, I always try to write on the principle of the iceberg. There is seven-eighths of it under water for every part that shows."² While this comment, also made earlier in Death in the Afternoon (1932), has generally been interpreted to refer to style, especially to his celebrated "art of omission," the context of the Paris Review talk also indicates its relevance to content. A few paragraphs later, Hemingway made the point more explicitly that he was talking about kinds of knowledge: "A writer, if he is any good, does not describe. He invents or

¹ Sean O'Faolain, "The End of a Good Man," Literature of the World, eds. Thelma G. James et al (New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1963), 88.

² George Plimpton, "Interview with Ernest Hemingway," Hemingway and His Critics, ed. Carlos Baker (New York: Hill and Wang, 1961), 34.

makes out of knowledge personal and impersonal and sometimes he seems to have unexplained knowledge which could come from forgotten racial or family experience."³ From such comments as this as well as from his fictional works, critics have noted Hemingway's exploration of the dark recesses of the imaginative mind to reveal patterns of knowledge ordinarily closed to the conscious mind. Carlos Baker has, for example, characterized Hemingway as being possessed of sabiduría, a Spanish word for natural or hidden knowledge.⁴

An important and perhaps crucial form of such knowledge is Hemingway's concern with death--the nature and the condition of that immitigable fact of all men's lives, and the limits to which man can know the "undiscovered country." For Hemingway, I argue, that knowledge results in beliefs culminating in the worship of death--a worship dramatized and celebrated in the cult of the bullring.

Hemingway's preoccupation with death has long been a matter of scholarly interest. Harvey Curtis Webster has pointed out that for Hemingway life was death. He lived to

³ Ibid., 35.

⁴ Carlos Baker, Hemingway: The Writer as Artist (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1963), 72.

the fullest in its presence. For him death was a mystique. It was religion. And it was love.⁵

Colonel Cantwell in Across the River and into the Trees expresses at least one form of Hemingway's continuing obsession with death:

It comes in small fragments that hardly show where it has entered. It comes, sometimes, atrociously. It can come from unboiled water; an un-pulled-up mosquito boot or it can come with the great, white-hot, clanging roar we have lived with. It comes in small cracking whispers that precede the noise of the automatic weapon. It can come with the smoke-emitting arc of the grenade, or the sharp, crashing drop of the mortar. . . . It comes in bed to most people I know, like love's opposite number. I have lived with it nearly all my life and the dispensing of it has been my trade.⁶

The allure of death proved so strong for Hemingway that when the world attained a temporary peace he sought out death, and he found it in the ritual of the bullring. Here in the morass of flesh, in the carnage of horses, he found what he had so long sought--a Nirvana of the senses, a mystique of death.

For Hemingway death was not a tragedy but a gift that provided an arena for man's triumph over his fears. And it

⁵ Harvey Curtis Webster, "Ernest Hemingway: The Pursuit of Death," Texas Quarterly, VII (1964), 152.

⁶ Ibid., 153.

was in that triumph that man proved himself man. And it was in giving death that man affirmed life. ". . . If you accept the role of death [said Hemingway] Thou shalt not kill is an easily and a naturally obeyed commandment. But when a man is still in rebellion against death he has pleasure in taking to himself one of the god-like attributes; that of giving it."⁷

In A Farewell to Arms Frederic Henry recognizes the futility of all service--the service of God, the service of patriotism, the service of love, and the service of the healer. These services, as respectively epitomized by the Priest, by Gino, by Catherine, and by Rinaldi, are rejected simply because they are ineffectual. Henry then replaces these dead gods with a god in whom he can believe--the god of death.⁸

Hemingway's next book, Death in the Afternoon, relates an ethical stance to his concern with death--that "what is moral is what you feel good after and what is immoral is what you feel bad after" (p. 4). Hemingway sees

⁷ Ernest Hemingway, Death in the Afternoon (New York: Scribner's, 1932), 233. Subsequent references will be to this edition and will be parenthesized within the text.

⁸ James F. Light, "The Religion of Death in A Farewell to Arms," MFS, VII (1961), 170-2.

the bullfight as "very moral" (p. 4). But bullfighting to Hemingway is something more, for it is in the bullring that man gains immortality through his domination of death.⁹

Considering Hemingway's interest in bullfighting, it is no surprise that his cast of mind should be mirrored in the country he loved best--Spain. In For Whom the Bell Tolls Robert Jordan thinks to himself: "We do it [kill] coldly but they [the Spaniards] do not, nor ever have. It is their extra sacrament. Their old one that they had before the new religion came from the far end of the Mediterranean, the one they have never abandoned but only suppressed and hidden to bring it out again in wars and inquisitions."¹⁰ The new religion Hemingway refers to is Christianity, and the old religion is, to judge from the context, the bull worship that permeated all Spain before the arrival of Christianity. Such evidence offers a strong indication that Hemingway was aware of the cult of bull worship in Spain and was deliberately making use of the archetypal knowledge implicit in such a cult in other books such as The Sun Also Rises.

⁹Ibid., 173.

¹⁰Ernest Hemingway, For Whom the Bell Tolls (New York: Scribner's, 1940), 286.

In Death in the Afternoon Hemingway comments further on the Spanish love of death--a love that is echoed by Hemingway himself. "The Spanish know that death is an inescapable reality, the one thing of which man is certain. They, therefore, have a religion that makes more of death than life. That is why they love the bullfight because the bullfight gives them a sense of the tragedy of death" (p. 266). He notes further: "Now the essence of the greatest emotional appeal in bullfighting is the feeling of immortality that the bullfighter feels in the middle of a great faena. . . . He gives the feeling of his immortality, and, as you watch it, it becomes yours. Then when it belongs to both of you, he proves it with his sword" (p. 213). Words such as "immortality" suggest that Hemingway was working, whether consciously or unconsciously, in a new milieu, and this new milieu was a religion of death that found its apotheosis in the ritual of the bullring.

CHAPTER II

HEMINGWAY AND PRIMITIVISM

With his reliance on archetypal thought about death, Spain, and the bull cult, Hemingway was allied with primitivist thought that was both ancient and newly discovered in the era of Freudian and Jungian psychology. This alliance was to lead him further and further into the archetypes of the unconscious mind and was to open up a fifth dimension for Hemingway as a writer.

Malcolm Cowley hinted at what he felt Hemingway was doing when he stated that Hemingway's rituals resemble those of primitive peoples and that he has a "feeling for half-forgotten sacraments," his cast of mind being "pre-Christian and pre-logical."¹ This "pre-logical and pre-Christian" emphasis can be noted in Hemingway's handling of archetypal imagery.

That Hemingway was aware of archetypal elements in writing can be seen in his interview with George Plimpton referred to above. When Plimpton questioned Hemingway on whether he believed the gift of writing was acquired or inherited in the Mendelian sense, Hemingway replied: "I do

¹Malcolm Cowley, The Viking Portable Hemingway (New York: Viking Press, 1944), xvii ff.

remember telling you that I believed imagination could be the result of inherited racial experience."² This statement by Hemingway is of major importance because it illustrates his awareness of archetypal experience and how it might be put to work in writing. If Hemingway's state of mind is "pre-Christian and pre-logical," as Cowley has stated, then Hemingway's statement has a greater import than what might appear at first glance. The more primitive a writer's responses are, the more he will tend to draw upon the archetypes of racial experience that have their roots in the primitive or subconscious levels of the mind.

It would seem, therefore, that when Hemingway was speaking of the "fifth dimension in prose" and the iceberg theory of writing that it was his intention to express what could be done by drawing upon universal responses in the reader's subconscious mind. This probing of the subconscious mind was responsible for Hemingway's close alliance with primitive thought, an alliance that was to form a leitmotif in his writings.

² Hemingway and His Critics, ed. Carlos Baker (New York: Hill and Wang, 1961), 24.

One of the important features of primitive religion was expulsion of embodied evils in the person of the public scapegoat, or, as Frye calls him, the pharmakos or sacrificial victim.³ This figure occurs in Hemingway's The Sun Also Rises. Robert Cohn is the outsider, the Jew who breaks the ritual of the bullring and who is destined to serve as the sacrificial victim for the aficionados or true believers--the keepers of the ritual and the code. Cohn is compared to a steer by Mike Campbell, who accuses him of following Brett around like a steer. It is the function of the steer in the bullfight to calm the bulls and make them docile. In doing so, they take the punishment of the bull's horns. So does Cohn receive the insults and scorn of the drunken Mike:

"It's no fun being a steer," Robert Cohn said.

"Don't you think so," Mike said. "I would have thought you'd loved being a steer, Robert."

"What do you mean, Mike?"

"They lead such a quiet life. They never say anything and they're always hanging around so. . . ."⁴

"Tell me, Robert. Why do you follow Brett around like a poor bloody steer. . .? Why don't you know when you're not wanted. You came down to San Sebastian where you weren't wanted, and followed Brett around like a bloody steer. Do you think that's right?" (p. 142)

³Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton Univ. Press, 1957), 651 ff.

⁴Ernest Hemingway, The Sun Also Rises (New York: Scribner's, 1954), 141. Subsequent references will be to this edition and will be parenthesized within the text.

Thus Cohn is excommunicated from the presence of the aficionados in order that he might bear the sins of all.

Further indication of archetypal imagery in Hemingway can be seen in the Festival of San Fermin in The Sun Also Rises. The date given by Hemingway for the beginning of the festival was Sunday, the 6th of July. This date coincides very closely with the ancient fire festivals of Europe.⁵ Jake Barnes notes ironically that "San Fermin is also a religious festival" (p. 153). Although battle imagery is present in Hemingway's description of the festival, the pagan religious elements--the marchers, the riau-riau music--all contribute to the pagan leitmotif that runs throughout the whole event. The festival is opened by an exploding rocket, and a fireworks specialist and his son send up fire balloons during the celebration. The pagan symbolism of the San Fermin section and the close approximation of the date of the festival with the date given for the ancient midsummer fires, the twenty-third or twenty-fourth of June, give evidence that there was perhaps more archetypal imagery in the San Fermin section than even Hemingway, the consummate artist, was conscious of.

⁵ Sir James Frazer, The Golden Bough (New York: Macmillan, 1951), 720 ff. Subsequent references will be parenthesized within the text.

Nowhere is Hemingway's use of archetypal imagery more in evidence than in his use of the bullring as a religious site. The sacrifice of the bull or bullock has long been associated with ancient religion. For example, the King of Madagascar was also high priest of the realm. At the great festival of the new year, when a bullock was sacrificed for the good of the kingdom, the king stood over the sacrifice to offer prayer and thanksgiving, while his attendants slaughtered the animal (Frazer, p. 11). There is an obvious corollary here between the king-priest and the matador-priest when we bear in mind that the matador-priest is carrying over a function originally performed by the king-priest of ancient times: the sacrificing of the bull so that the devotees of the bull cult might share in the grace bestowed by the bull's blood (Frazer, p. 408).

Further, it is interesting that in the Talos legend the bronze Talos is represented as the image of the sun with a bull's head. Hemingway in Death in the Afternoon says that a very important part of the ritual of the bullfight is the sun: "The sun is very important. The theory, practice and spectacle of bullfighting have all been built on the assumption of the presence of the sun and when it does not shine over a third of the bullfight is missing. The Spanish say,

'El sol es el mejor torero.' The sun is the best bull-fighter. . . ."⁶ Hemingway many times worked with language and symbols that even he did not realize the import of. Because he was essentially a primitive who wrote viscerally rather than intellectually, he was not always cognizant of the depths or dimension of his own prose.

The archetypal bull god has been a symbol of worship in many lands. Oftentimes the bull takes the form of the corn-spirit or goddess of vegetation and growth. At other times the corn-spirit in the form of a bull is killed at the beginning of harvest. At Pouilly, near Dijon, when the last ears of corn are cut, an ox adorned with ribbons, flowers, and ears of corn is led around the field followed by troops of dancers. Then a man disguised as the devil cuts the last ears of corn and slaughters the ox (Frazer, p. 530).

In the Athenian sacrifice of the "murder of the ox" those responsible for the ritual sacrifice attempted to absolve themselves of the blame for the killing of the ox which took place on the altar of Zeus Polieus on the Acropolis. Finally in a ritual trial the king proclaimed the ax and knife guilty, and they were cast into the sea.

⁶Ernest Hemingway, Death in the Afternoon (New York: Scribner's, 1932), 15. Subsequent references will be to this edition and will be parenthesized within the text.

Thus it appears that the "murder of the ox" was considered sacrilege and that the ox itself was regarded as a sacred creature. Varro reported that in Attica the killing of an ox was at one time regarded as a capital crime (Frazer, pp. 540-1).

Further evidence of the worship of the bull as a god can be observed in the cult of Dionysus who was sometimes worshipped in the form of a bull. As a part of the ritual a goat or bull was rended alive. The animal was torn to pieces so that each devotee might receive a part of the fertility of the god. Following the rending, the flesh was eaten raw as a sacrament analagous to Christian Holy Communion (Frazer, p. 543).

In the Roman Catholic version of Holy Communion when man partakes of the bread and wine, he partakes of the blood and body of Christ. This bond reaffirms man's spiritual union with God. The partaking of the substance of the godhead was a salient feature of primitive religions of which the worship of the bull formed an important part. The minotaur killed by the Athenian hero Theseus was probably a priest wearing a ritual mask of a bull. It was to placate the minotaur that the Athenian youths were sacrificed. In modern bullfighting ritual it is noteworthy that when the bull is killed well,

the matador receives the tail, hoof, or ear of the bull. This partaking of the godhead is analagous to the drinking of the wine and the eating of the bread during Holy Communion.

This union between man and God, between man and death, between man and love, is almost sexual. The total giving of oneself to the godhead, the total immersion that finds its culmination in death, this ecstasy, is found in the bullring. In Death in the Afternoon, Hemingway notes:

The complete faena takes a man out of himself and makes him feel immortal while it is proceeding, it gives him an ecstasy, that is, while momentary, as profound as any religious ecstasy; moving all the people in the ring together and increasing in emotional intensity as it proceeds, carrying the bullfighter with it, he playing on the crowd through the bull and being moved as it responds in a growing ecstasy of ordered, formal, passionate, increasing disregard for death that leaves you when it is over, and the death administered to the animal that has made it possible, as changed and as sad as any major emotion will leave you (pp. 206-7).

In China the bull is seen even more clearly as a deity. On the first day of spring the governor or the prefect of the city sacrifices to the Divine Husbandman who is represented as a man with a bull's head. An effigy of a cow or ox stands outside the city, and this effigy is filled with grain. The priests then flail the effigy with sticks until it breaks, whereupon there is a scramble by the people to obtain a piece

of the effigy as it is believed that whoever receives one of the pieces will be fortunate throughout the year (Frazer, pp. 542-3). It is difficult not to ally the custom here with the custom of the matador awarding the ear, tail, or hoof of the bull to whomever he favors.

There is persuasive evidence that Hemingway had some knowledge of Sir James Frazer's The Golden Bough, the major source of primitive sacrificial lore in the 1920's. It is well-known that writers many times pick up information from discussion with fellow writers. Ezra Pound, one of Hemingway's friends and mentors, said Frazer was an essential for any contemporary mind.⁷ Further, Pound had a deep interest in old religions.⁸ Hemingway, always alert to knowledge that provides a richer basis for imaginative reality, probably took Pound's advice that Frazer was "an essential for any contemporary mind" and incorporated pagan religious themes into such writings as The Sun Also Rises, For Whom the Bell Tolls, and The Old Man and the Sea. Although such evidence is admittedly indirect, the countless times that Hemingway seems

⁷ New Approaches to Ezra Pound, ed. Eva Hesse (Berkeley and Los Angeles: Univ. of California Press, 1969), 193.

⁸ Noel Stock, Poet in Exile (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1964), 17-18.

to have drawn from Frazer suggests a close knowledge of that source.

Another example of a primitive archetype mentioned by Frazer occurs in "Now I Lay Me." In this Hemingway story Nick Adams fears his soul will leave his body:

I myself did not want to sleep because I had been living for a long time with the knowledge that if I ever shut my eyes in the dark and let myself go, my soul would go out of my body. I had been that way for a long time, ever since I had been blown up at night and felt it go out of me and go off and then come back.⁹

Frazer mentions the absence and recall of the soul in his chapter on "The Perils of the Soul." While Nick Adams believed the purgation of sleep would prevent his soul from leaving his body, primitive people use more devious and oftentimes cruel methods. The Hindus snap their fingers when someone yawns to prevent his soul from leaving his body. The Itonamas of South America seal up the eyes, nose, and mouth of a dying person so his ghost cannot escape and entrap others (Frazer, p. 209). Frazer says further that the soul of a sleeper is supposed to wander from his body and do the things

⁹ Ernest Hemingway, The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway (New York: Scribner's, 1966), 363.

which that person dreams of. And if the soul should be permanently detained, the person deprived of that vital element would die (Frazer, pp. 210-11). Is it any wonder that Nick Adams refused to sleep for fear that he would return to the world of nightmare of his war experience? And, of course, there was always his subliminal fear that his soul would never return.

Hemingway also appears to have been acquainted with the primitive principle of taboo. In The Old Man and the Sea Santiago was tabooed because he was possessed of the worst form of salao or bad luck. This taboo on intercourse with those who might contaminate one is discussed by Frazer in his chapter on "Tabooed Acts." These taboos take many forms such as taboos on the king concerning intercourse with strangers or even taboos on behalf of the people against the malignant power exercised by strangers. An example of the latter is the Bechuan ceremony of purification by shaving their heads after journeys. This cleansing is done to counteract any contamination wrought by mingling with strangers (Frazer, p. 229).

Frazer also has a chapter on tabooed words. It will be recalled that Frederic Henry in A Farewell to Arms found words like "glory" and "honor" obscene.¹⁰ These words may

¹⁰Ernest Hemingway, A Farewell to Arms (New York: Scribner's, 1929), 185.

be considered taboo as far as Lieutenant Henry is concerned. Even language itself is taboo in The Sun Also Rises. "You'll lose it if you talk about it," says Jake Barnes to Brett Ashley (p. 245). The secret code language used by the expatriates in The Sun Also Rises is also reminiscent of taboo. Words such as "translate" and "daunted" take on special meaning when used by the expatriates. Something akin to this secret language occurs in primitive cultures like that of the Zulu. In Zululand every tribe has words peculiar to itself. Members of one family may be barred from using words employed by another. Thus, for multitudes of words there may be as many as four synonyms (Frazer, p. 300). Obviously, this kind of taboo results in much confusion and renders the Zulu language almost unintelligible to strangers. The code language of the expatriates in The Sun Also Rises must have struck outsiders in a like fashion.

It was a common occurrence for the kings of primitive man to have priestly duties. The duties of the primitive priest-king are epitomized by Hemingway in the person of the matador--the priest of the ritual of death. Frazer speaks in his chapter, "The Killing of the Divine King," of god-men being killed before their waning powers bring about the destruction of the whole tribe (Frazer, p. 309).

The matador, the priest-king of the ritual of death, cannot in a modern society be put to death when his strength or cunning fails, but the representative of the godhead himself can certainly do so. When the matador's waning powers fail to produce that spirit of immortality that Hemingway speaks of in Death in the Afternoon he must be put to death. Here we are, of course, dealing with the subconscious mind in its most primitive and most violent aspects, but, if we are to believe what Freud and Jung have written, the human mind is the repository of much that has been forgotten by the intellect but not by the race consciousness. We have observed how in religion it is not uncommon for an animal, especially the bull, to stand for the god himself just as in Christianity the Lamb stands for Christ Himself. So, when the matador because of his waning powers no longer proves equal to his duties as the priest of death, the godhead [the bull] removes him from that office.

Bullfighting has many religious ramifications including as we have already seen, Holy Communion. Whereas in modern bullfighting there is no actual eating of the dead bull in order to share its substance, there is in a good bullfight a rending of the bull. Typically a matador who has killed a noble bull well is awarded the tail and hoof of the bull. It is a great honor to be the recipient of one of the trophies

from the hand of the matador. There appears to be an element of homeopathic magic here just as when a Wagogo man of East Africa kills a lion, he eats of the heart to become as brave as the lion (Frazer, p. 574).

Further, the bull appeared as a sacred animal in the ritual of Attis in which savage, orgiastic worship were included a sacramental meal and a baptism of blood. In the sacrament the worshipper ate out of a drum and drank out of a cymbal, both of which instruments formed an integral part of the orchestra of Attis. In the baptism of blood the devotee descended into a pit and a bull adorned with garlands of flowers was stabbed to death with a consecrated spear. This ritual killing of the bull took place on a wooden grating above the pit, and as the bull's blood flowed through the wooden grating it was rapturously received by the devotees. They ascended to meet the homage and adoration of their friends as ones who had their sins washed away by the blood of the bull and had been born again to eternal life (Frazer, p. 408).

Hemingway also recognizes the bull as a sacred animal. In For Whom the Bell Tolls the head of the last bull killed by Finito in Valladolid was mounted and presented to him. Hemingway describes the mounted head as shrouded in a purple

cloth just as the images of the saints were covered during the week of the passion of Christ.¹¹

We can see the archetype of sacrifice in the cult of the bullring. The archetype of sacrifice is the dividing of a heroic body or a divine body among a group which brings the group into unity with the body.¹² Therefore, the symbolic sharing of the mana of the bull among the aficionados of The Sun Also Rises would qualify as a sacrificial archetype. But, according to Frye, the archetype is paradoxical; for, in spite of the communion with the body, the participants remain outside the body in the sense that they realize "the body really belongs to another, a greater, and a potentially wrathful power."¹³ If this is so, it would account in part for the apparent aimlessness, the disorientation, and the existential despair of the aficionados of The Sun Also Rises, for they realize that even though they share an evanescent glory through the body they will never be part of the body.

11

Ernest Hemingway, For Whom the Bell Tolls (New York: Scribner's, 1940), 185.

¹²Frye, 214.

¹³Frye, 214.

Frye states further that in the demonic archetype the erotic relation becomes a fierce, destructive passion. Brett Ashley, the putative pagan priestess of the bull cult, is sought as an object of desire and therefore cannot be possessed.¹⁴ It is also relevant that in the myth of Attis in Frazer, the priests' worship centered around their self-castration. In this vein we must remember that the same kind of infirmity made Jake Barnes' desire for Brett Ashley a hell on earth. Thus his desire for Brett echoes Frye's statement that the demonic imagery becomes a fierce destructive passion. According to Mike Campbell, Robert Cohn calls Brett a Circe and claims she "turns men into swine" (p. 144).

Frye's apocalyptic world of the Bible can also be compared to the apocalyptic world of the bull cult. According to Frye, the sheep is the human form of the animal world, the garden or park of the vegetable world, the city of the mineral world, the society of men of the human world, and the society of gods of the divine world.

He reduces the above to a chart:

¹⁴Frye, 149.

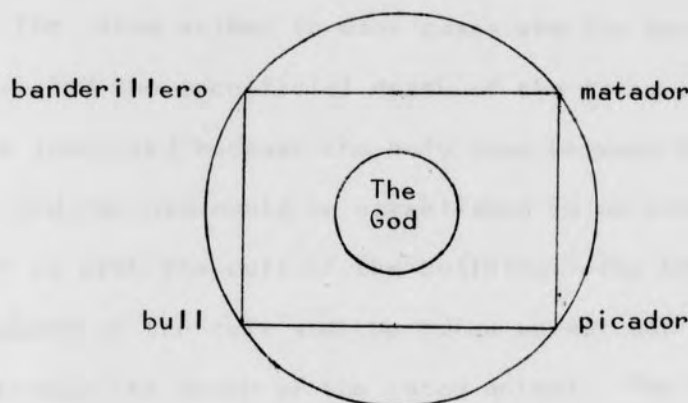
Just as Christ unified Frye's schema, so does the matador unify the above schema. Thus, the matador is the archetypal god of the bull cult. He is the spirit made flesh. He is the society of men in one man. He is the spirit of the god made one with the god by killing the godhead. He is the spirit of the archetypal god of vegetation, and he is the temple of the godhead made flesh.

Further, it will be seen that the archetype of bull cult worship will fit itself into a Jungian mandala, a mandala being the central point of the psyche to which everything is related, by which everything is arranged, and which in itself is a source of energy.¹⁶ The archetype of the mandala is the human psyche itself, the mandala representing the psyche's attempt to merge with God who is manifest in all creation. The mandala is expressed by a quaternity or four, and all squareness strives toward a midpoint. Thus four finds its ultimate significance only in the One.¹⁷

Therefore, a mandala of the bull cult would resolve itself thus:

¹⁶ Jolande Jacobi, Complex, Archetype, and Symbol in the Work of C. G. Jung (New York: Pantheon Books, 1959), 129.

¹⁷ Ibid., 170.



That is, each participant in the drama of the bullring represents a squaring of the circle and a subsequent merging with the godhead. The roles of the bull, the matador, the banderillero, and the picador are merely a prelude to the merger with the godhead that occurs at the moment of the death of the bull.

The bull can certainly be considered a totem animal. The social side of totem worship centered around rules of conduct that members of the totem must obey.¹⁸ In The Sun Also Rises the rules of conduct are very strict and breaking the rules results, as in Cohn's case, with ostracism from the group.

¹⁸Sigmund Freud, The Basic Writings of Sigmund Freud, trans. and ed. by Dr. A. A. Brill (New York: The Modern Library, 1938), 889.

The totem animal in many cases was the sacrificial animal. And the sacrificial death of the totem animal could only be justified because the holy bond between the participants and the god could be established in no other way.¹⁹

Thus it is with the cult of the bullring. The holy bond between the members of the cult and the totem animal can be accomplished only through the death of the totem animal. For the cult of the bullring is the worship of death.

The exuberant spirits of the holiday crowd at San Fermin or the holiday spirit of a bullfight crowd in general can be traced to the primitive impulses aroused in the participants' minds by the totem or bull worship of their ancestors. Following the slaying of the totem animal, ancient man rejoiced in the spirit of a holiday, the holiday mind being brought about by a release of what was formerly forbidden. Thus excesses of all kinds were not only condoned but encouraged. This phenomenon can be observed not only in the festivities of San Fermin but also in the modern celebration of the pre-Lenten season during Mardi Gras.

¹⁹
Ibid., 912.

During the rites of Dionysus, bull worship took on a savage aspect. In the midst of the Dionysian revel, the revellers, while drunk with wine, tore a live bull apart with their hands and teeth. They then consumed the entire body of the bull. The consumption of the bull's flesh supposedly made the revellers one with the god and granted them immortality (Frazer, p. 453).

This archetype of sacrifice can be observed in Hemingway's For Whom the Bell Tolls. During his mission to the Republican lines Andrés reminisces about his part in the rending of the bull in the amateur capea. He remembers that he grabbed the bull by the tail and horns and that the crowd then swarmed onto the bull and stabbed him. He recalls further that he threw himself on the withers of the prostrate animal and bit its ear. Following his initial rending of the bull, Andrés was expected to repeat the ritual each year. The men even
20
joked about his eating cattle raw.

Hemingway's close alliance with primitive thought can be again observed in The Old Man and the Sea. Primitive man

²⁰ For Whom the Bell Tolls, 365.

quite often looked upon animals as his equals or even his superiors. Santiago reveals this train of thought when he says of the great fish: "If I were him I would put in everything now and go until something broke. But, thank God, they are not as intelligent as we who kill them; although they are more noble and more able."²¹ Again, Santiago says, "Man is not much beside the great birds and beasts. Still I would rather be that beast down there in the darkness of the sea" (p. 68). Finally, Santiago calls the great fish brother: "But I have killed this fish which is my brother. . ." (p. 95).

Santiago, the matador of the sea, was also a believer in magic. A turtle's heart will beat for hours after it has been cut up and butchered, thought the old man, and for that reason he ate its eggs so he would have its strength: "But the old man thought. I have such a heart and my feet and hands are like theirs. He ate the white eggs to give himself strength" (p. 37). Again the old man drank shark liver oil because "it was no worse than getting up at the hours [the fishermen] rose and it was very good against all colds and

²¹ Ernest Hemingway, The Old Man and the Sea (New York: Scribner's, 1952), 63. Subsequent references are to this edition and are parenthesized within the text.

grippes and it was good for the eyes" (p. 37). Lastly, the old man reveals his belief in magic when he eats the bonito. Because the bonito is a strong full-blooded fish and because "the strength is still in it" he eats it (p. 59). The preceding examples illustrate the primitive belief in homeopathic magic, i.e., the belief that by eating the flesh of an animal or man one acquires the physical, moral, or intellectual qualities of that animal or man.

Another example of primitivism in The Old Man and the Sea occurs when, like the primitive hunters who asked the pardon of an animal when they killed it, Santiago and Manolin ask the pardon of the female marlin before they butcher it: "The boy was sad too and we begged her pardon and butchered her promptly" (p. 50).

Primitive man looked upon nature with reverence and awe. This reverence and awe was often expressed by his worship of and alliance with the great birds and beasts of his world. Just as the fish and the man are joined together spiritually and physically in The Old Man and the Sea, so are the matador and the bull joined together in the bullfighting scenes. An example of this union is found in The Sun Also Rises:

Romero's left hand dropped the muleta over the bull's muzzle to blind him, his left shoulder went forward between the horns, and for just an instant he and the bull were one (p. 218).

The bullfight itself is an allegory of the Holy Communion archetype. The mayor of the city where the bullfight is held is the high priest, for it is at his order that the fight begins, and it is he who throws to the parade marshals the key to the bull pen. (One can not help here but think of St. Peter and the keys to the kingdom.) His subordinate priests--the matadors, the picadors, and the banderilleros--then perform their respective duties in the ritual. Finally, with the death of the bull the ritual is completed. The aficionados become one with the bull at the same moment the matador becomes one with the bull--the moment of the bull's death. In Christianity the bread and wine take on the aspect of the flesh and blood of Christ. In the ritual of the bullring the participants share in the shedding of blood that brings them the same aesthetic-cathartic response that the partakers of Holy Communion derive from their experience. In Death in the Afternoon Hemingway articulates his feelings thus: "I feel very fine while it [the bullfight] is going on and have the feeling of life and death and immortality, and after it is over I feel very sad but very fine" (p. 4).

Certainly the tragedy reenacted in the bullring is reminiscent of the messiah archetype. Hemingway in Death in the Afternoon and in a dispatch for the Toronto Star Weekly,

October 20, 1923, refers to the bullfight not as a sport but a tragedy. In the Toronto Star Weekly dispatch Hemingway says the first act of the tragedy occurs when the picador receives the attack and pics the bull with his lance; the second, when the banderillero plants the banderillas; and the third, when the matador kills the bull.²²

In "Today Is Friday" the death of Christ is also seen as a tragedy in three acts, the first act being the "picing" of Christ as He is lifted up on the cross, the second act being the planting of the banderillas when He is nailed to the cross, and the third act being His death on the cross after the Roman soldier lances His side. "You see me slip the old spear into him?"²³ says the first soldier. Moreover, the first soldier keeps saying, "He was pretty good in there today."²⁴ This statement is an echo of the picador Zurito's statement about the matador Manuel Garcia in "The Undefeated." Following Manuel's display of courage in the bullring and the

²² William White, ed., By-Line: Ernest Hemingway (New York: Scribner's, 1967), 96-7.

²³ The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway, 359.

²⁴ Ibid., 357.

ensuing cornada that places him on the operating table, Zurito answers Manuel's, "Wasn't I doing good, Manos?" with ". . . You were doing great."²⁵

By drawing parallels with Christ I do not wish to imply that the bullfight is a Christian ritual. I am saying that the cult of the bullring is a type of religion and that it has some similarities with Christianity. This fact is not surprising since Christianity borrowed so many pagan rituals during a time when it was by no means certain which would triumph--paganism or Christianity. The cult of the bullring is a pagan ritual in its practices and beliefs, and what it shares with Christianity is those ritual forms that Christianity borrowed from the cult.

Hemingway's recognition of the bullfight as a religion is evident in Death in the Afternoon. In Hemingway's work the hero seeks reconciliation with the knowledge of death. No one effects this reconciliation better than the bullfighter. One can attain this reconciliation if he can become the equivalent of the "complete bullfighter."²⁶ Hemingway realized in

²⁵ Ibid., 266.

²⁶ Joseph DeFalco, The Hero in Hemingway's Short Stories (Pittsburgh: Univ. of Pittsburgh Press, 1963), 194-5.

Death in the Afternoon, however, that the true bullfighter was a rare phenomenon, so rare that he equated a true bullfighter with a true messiah:

But waiting for a messiah is a long business and you get many fake ones. There is no record in the Bible of the number of false messiahs that came before Our Lord, but the history of the last ten years of bullfighting would record little else (p. 86).

This acknowledgment by Hemingway of the close relationship between bullfighting and religion takes on more meaning when we view the close relationship between bull worship and Christianity. There is no doubt but that the Christians borrowed their concept of a sin-cleansing blood bath from Mithraism. When Christianity finally triumphed, bull worship was so deeply ingrained in Spain that Christianity was forced to assimilate other features of the cult. Only in Spain did the cult fuse successfully with Christianity.²⁷ This fact accounts, I believe, for the strange alliance of pagan ritual with Catholic ritual in the Festival of San Fermin in The Sun Also Rises.

²⁷ Jack Randolph Conrad, The Horn and the Sword (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, Inc., 1957), 164.

When the Romans introduced their worship into Spain, the Spaniards assimilated the gods Mars and Jupiter as representatives of the Spanish bull god. The bull god then eventually came to be associated with Jupiter. The fourth century Christian scholar Prudentius denounced the bullfights in Spain as "the delight of infernal Jupiter."²⁸

After the Romans, the conquering Visigoths and Moors found bullfighting to their liking. When we understand Spain's early fascination with bull worship and the accommodations made by the Christians, we can see why a primitive mind like Hemingway's could take root in Spanish soil and why his infatuation with bullfighting could merge into cult worship.

His infatuation with cult worship, however, is made even clearer by reference to the psychology of religion. According to Freud, religion is a collective neurosis brought on by crises that man finds himself unable to resolve. In his youth one's father, an omnipotent, omniscient figure, guides him and loves him. Later, being unable to combat his problems with reason, he regresses to an earlier stage of development and invents another father figure, God, who will see him through his crises.²⁹

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Erich Fromm, Psychoanalysis and Religion (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1950), 10-11.

Thus, according to Freud, all religion is a collective neurosis. But compulsive neurotic patients invent their own primitive ritual to combat the forces of darkness within themselves. Hemingway's devotees belonged to a cult that had its own private ritual, its own religion, its own neurosis.

That Hemingway himself had neurotic tendencies seems likely from Freud's description of the neurotic type. Freud wrote that for the normal person dreams take the form of wish-fulfillment, but the neurotic patient's dreams, instead, partake of the world of nightmare and trauma. Further, his dreams hearken back to the experience that produced the neurosis. When one recalls Hemingway's own terrible wounding in Italy, this theory would help explain his obsession with the wound and death motif that occupies such a large place in his works.

Hemingway's primitivism resembles the actions of primitive man who sought solace in ritual. Primitive man found himself in a hostile world that demanded constant ritual and constant propitiation if he were to survive.

Hemingway and his heroes found themselves in the same kind of world--a world of hostile forces where nightmare haunted the sleep and where death oppressed the soul. Their only hope lay in the correct performance of private ritual. Thus life became a series of ceremonies. In "Big Two-Hearted

River," for example, the whole trip can be regarded as a ritual to banish evil spirits.³⁰ The dark forces are personified by the burnt-out town of Seney, but Nick puts those forces behind him as he penetrates the green ferns and reaches the river. Upon making camp for the night, Nick feels at peace because he has succeeded in banishing the dark forces: "Now it was done. It had been a hard trip. . . . He was settled. Nothing could touch him."³¹

Hemingway's familiarity with the imagery in The Golden Bough would suggest that he was acquainted with the work and made use of its archetypal patterns in his work. Moreover, his tacit acknowledgment of bull worship as religion allied with his use of ancient religious archetypes such as totemism, magic, and taboo combined to create a prose of universal dimensions. The neurotic tendencies responsible for his development and use of archetypal knowledge are not in themselves as important as the use he made of such knowledge to create a prose of simplicity and power that forms the inner core of the Hemingway style.

³⁰Malcolm Cowley, "Nightmare and Ritual in Hemingway," Hemingway: A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. Robert P. Weeks (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1962), 48.

³¹The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway, 215.

CHAPTER III

HEMINGWAY AND THE CULT OF THE BULLRING

The cult of the bullring incorporates Hemingway's obsession with death and fondness for primitive ritual into an arena where death and primitivism become magical ingredients in a formula that provides a moral victory for man over nada.

In The Sun Also Rises the devotees of the cult had certain marks that set them apart. One of these marks was the wounding motif which is seen in the novel in Jake Barnes' conversation with Bill Gorton. When Jake remarks to Bill that he will be "daunted" after three more pernod, Bill replies, "If I begin to feel daunted, I'll go off by myself. I'm like a cat that way."¹ At this point they consciously carry over the idea of cat-like withdrawal of the wounded from an earlier conversation with Harvey Stone, the expatriate whose spiritual trauma has caused him to retreat into alcoholism and passive despair.

This exchange illustrates a further extension of the wounding motif--code language. By making use of code language,

¹ Ernest Hemingway, The Sun Also Rises (New York: Scribner's, 1954), 73. Subsequent references are to this edition and will be parenthesized within the text.

the devotees of the cult affirm their allegiance to and loyalty for the group. It is the pagan symbol of alliance with the cult just as in ancient Christianity the fish was the symbol of the Christian's alliance with Christ. Although the usual dictionary meaning of "daunted" is "to lessen the courage of," in Jake's conversation with Bill Gorton "daunted" takes on the special meaning of nighttime terror and nada.

The mark of separation of the cult is seen clearly when Jake checks into the Hotel Montoya. When Montoya greets Jake, he smiles at Jake as if there were a special secret between the two of them:

He always smiled as though bullfighting were a very special secret . . . a rather shocking but really deep secret we knew about. He always smiled as if there was something lewd about the secret to outsiders, but that it was something that we understood (p. 131).

The polite sharing of the secret is made more implicit when Montoya tells Jake he is a true aficionado.

To have aficion, to belong to the cult, set one apart. Although it was unusual for an American like Jake to have aficion, he truly had it, as is evidenced by "a sort of spiritual examination" conducted by the aficionados. Following Jake's "spiritual examination," they always put their hands

on his shoulders to confirm he had aficion: "But nearly always there was the actual touching. It seemed as though they wanted to touch you to make it certain" (p. 132). The laying on of hands is similar to the consecration of a new priest by the bishop in the Roman Catholic Church. The act symbolizes the priest's new life as a priest of God. The same laying on of hands symbolizes Jake's initiation into the cult of the bullring.

During the Festival of San Fermin, the image of the saint was, according to Hemingway, "translated" from one church to another. The word "translate" has here a special meaning. No longer is San Fermin a Christian procession or festival but a pagan one, and Brett Ashley takes on the aspect of a pagan priestess of the bullring:

Some dancers formed a circle around Brett and started to dance. They wore big wreaths of white garlic around their necks. They took Bill and me by the arms and put us in a circle. Bill started to dance, too. They were all chanting. Brett wanted to dance but they did not want her to. They wanted her as an image to dance around (p. 155).

The significance of the garlic wreaths becomes clearer when one considers that garlic was once widely credited with the power to drive away evil and was often worn around the neck

for this purpose.²

Brett is again seen as the cult priestess as she takes the hand of Pedro Romero, the bullfighter, and tells his fortune: "Brett reached out and spread the fingers apart. 'Oh,' he said in English, 'you tell fortunes?'" (p. 185) Brett then proceeds to tell Romero that there are "thousands of bulls" in his future and that he will "live a long time" (pp. 185-6).

During this dialogue Jake acts as an interpreter and "translates" Romero's Spanish to Brett. "Translate," however, has the further meaning here of changing from one state to another. Thus in the word "translate" we see another reference to the pagan priestess image of Brett. Also, there is a correspondence between Brett's role as a fortune-teller and the function of the Pythoness, the priestess of Apollo at Delphi. Supposedly, when the Pythoness spoke, she spoke with the voice of the god and never erred.³ It would then appear that Brett in this section of The Sun Also Rises was speaking in the capacity of soothsayer.

²Maria Leach, ed., Funk and Wagnall's Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology, and Legend (New York: Funk and Wagnall's, 1949), 441.

³Edith Hamilton, Mythology (New York and Toronto: The New American Library, 1942), 30.

Brett Ashley is seen again as a cult image when Bill Gorton refers to "translating" her to the hotel (p. 159). Here "translate" once more has the meaning of changing from one state to another. The cult image surfaces too as Jake and Brett come out of church and happen upon Cohn. Then they all three go to the gypsy camp to have Brett's fortune told (p. 151). Brett is also seen as the pagan priestess when Pedro Romero awards her the ear of the bull:

[The bull Bocanegra's] ear was cut by popular acclamation and given to Pedro Romero, who in turn gave it to Brett who wrapped it in a handkerchief. . . (p. 199).

Brett is seen again as the cult priestess when Romero attempts to make her into a woman. Being a cult priestess, she is an image to be worshipped, not a woman to be ravaged. Brett refuses to grow long hair as Romero wishes her to do because she says she would "look like hell" (p. 242). Finally, on the last day of the fiesta, Brett assumes the role of cult priestess. As she advances through the crowd in the square, Jake detects the cult image in her:

I looked up and saw her coming through the crowd in the square, walking, her head up, as though the fiesta were being staged in her honor. . ." (p. 206).

Pagan festivals were often replete with sexual symbolism. This motif can be detected in Pamplona as Pedro Romero kills the bull:

Romero's left hand dropped the muleta over the bull's muzzle to blind him, his left shoulder went forward between the horns as the sword went in, and for just an instant he and the bull were one. . . (p. 218).

The sword is a phallic symbol, and when it is thrust into the bull the matador and the bull become symbolically one.

This symbolic sexual union with the bull that gave the cult the feeling of immortality is a vicarious archetypal pleasure derived from the sexual erotica that formerly flourished in bull worship.

The inability of the aficionados of The Sun Also Rises to love has its basis in a neurosis springing from sexual repression. This repression exceeds the normal limits and results in a resistance against the sexual instinct which becomes associated with shame and loathing. This loathing is accompanied with a flight from the sexual problem, the result of which is sexual ignorance or innocence.⁴

This neurotic feature has as its paradoxical extension an enormous sexual craving. The guilt associated with the sexual craving then results in sexual rejection. If confronted with a sexual demand, the neurotic rejects it.⁵

⁴Sigmund Freud, The Basic Writings of Sigmund Freud, trans. and ed. by Dr. A. A. Brill (New York: The Modern Library, 1938), 574.

⁵Ibid.

In The Sun Also Rises the cult of the bullring was composed of a group who epitomized the constituent components of neurosis--an enormous sexual craving and an exaggerated sexual rejection. The truth is that Jake Barnes' sexual injury was more than a physical injury. He would have been a sexual cripple even if it were not for his sexual wound. Jake himself realized in the end that he and Brett could never have been true lovers under any circumstances:

"Oh, Jake," Brett said, "we could have had such a damned good time together. . . ."
 "Yes." I said. "Isn't it pretty to think so?" (p. 247)

This incapacity to love resulted in a spiritual landscape similar to that of T. S. Eliot's The Waste Land, where the land was ruled by a Fisher King who was, not irrelevantly, impotent.

It is ironic that Jake Barnes' affliction was sexual because part of the ancient worship of the bull centered around the bull as a fertility symbol. In Crete, for example, the king dressed as a bull, as mentioned earlier, and the queen as a cow. Then a ritual intercourse designed to fructify the land took place.⁶

⁶ Jack Randolph Conrad, The Horn and the Sword (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., Inc., 1957), 118.

As noted above, Cohn, the sacrificial victim of the cult of the bull, is abused by Mike Campbell, but he is not the only member of the cult who hates the Jew. Bill Gorton says that Cohn has got the "Jewish superiority so strong that he thinks the only emotion he'll get out of the [bullfight] will be being bored" (p. 162). Later on, Bill refers to Cohn as "that kike" (p. 164).

Following the bullfight, Mike takes up the taunting by asking Cohn if he thought he belonged among the true expatriates: "Do you think you belong here among us. . . ? Why don't you see when you're not wanted, Cohn?" (p. 177)

Brett Ashley too is willing to make Cohn the scape-goat. Cohn attempts to intrude between Jake and Brett, and Brett scathingly replies to Cohn's, "I'll stay with you," with the following:

"Oh, don't!" Brett said. "For God's sake, go off somewhere. Can't you see Jake and I want to talk?"

"I didn't," Cohn said. "I thought I'd sit here because I felt a little tight."

"What a hell of a reason for sitting with any one. If you're tight, go to bed. Go on to bed" (pp. 180-1).

This continual "picing" of Cohn by the devotees of the cult is augmented by the fact that Cohn is the only member of the group who believes in romantic love. The true

believers know love is an illusion. That Cohn is morally defeated in his fight with Pedro Romero, the high priest of the bull cult, is apropos, for it is he who assumes the role of carrying out the sacrifice of the sacrificial victim. Romero's humiliation of Cohn intensifies his image as a scapegoat figure.

The bullring as the center of the worship of the bull can be seen after Romero has killed the last bull of the afternoon on the last day of the fiesta. There was great rejoicing and boys ran toward Romero from all parts of the arena. They then made a circle around him and started to dance around the bull. Here we see that the archetypes of primitivism do not die easily, and we have some proof that Hemingway was deliberately manipulating archetypal motifs to create a prose of the fifth dimension (p. 220).

Even the communion archetype is present in the cult of the bullring in The Sun Also Rises. In the back room of the wine shop into which they were pushed after the completion of the riau-riau song, Brett and Bill are sitting on barrels surrounded by the dancers:

Everybody had his arms on everybody else's shoulders, and they were all singing. Mike was sitting at a table with several men in their shirtsleeves, eating from a bowl of tuna fish, chopped onions and vinegar. They were all drinking wine and mopping up the oil and vinegar with pieces of bread (p. 157).

The drinking of the wine and the eating of the bread can be seen as an analogue of Holy Communion, an analogue that Hemingway may well have been conscious of. Certainly his use of the tuna has archetypal significance, for the fish was the ancient symbol for the Christian cult.

The subjective transformation that results from religious ecstasy sometimes occurs in groups. This is the case of the cult of the bullring in The Sun Also Rises. In this phenomenon the group regresses to lower and lower primitive states of consciousness. This invariable lowering which would finally result in a mass psyche is held in abeyance by ritual which enables the group to hold onto a common center of the experience.⁷

The common center of experience in The Sun Also Rises is the ritual of death in the bullring. The ritual provides an anchor in a sea of uncertainty. If it were not for the shared ritual, the group would be in danger of disintegration and submergence in the mass psyche. The fear of losing identity, of becoming part of the mass, probably accounts for much of the dramatic tension inherent in the cult of the bullring.

⁷ Carl Gustaf Jung, Collected Works, eds. Herbert Read et al (New York: Pantheon Books, 1953), IX, Pt. I, 126-7.

Romero, the priest-king of the bullring in The Sun Also Rises, might be said to experience in the slaying of the bull a transcendence of life. By slaying the bull and thus partaking of the godhead, the initiate's life is symbolically renewed. No wonder Romero thought himself immortal. He tells Brett, "I'm never going to die" (p. 186).

This thinking is made all the more valid by the fact that there was a myth of Dionysus-Zagreus who was dismembered and came to life again. In fact, the Eleusinian rites, which centered around the worship of Dionysus, had at their foundation the belief in immortality. When one recalls that the bull was often associated with the worship of Dionysus, it can be understood why the cult of the bullring is, in fact,
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a religion.

The torero or high priest of the bullring pitted not only his strength against the bull but also his character. In fact, it was his will that enabled him to triumph over nearly half a ton of animal energy. Thus it was with Manuel Garcia in "The Undefeated." An analogue of The Old Man and the Sea, "The Undefeated" illustrates the theme that "a man can be destroyed but not defeated." Thus it was with Manalo.

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Ibid., 118.

Even though he had just risen from his hospital bed, the victim of a previous severe cogida, Manuel summoned his inner resources of skill and courage against the bull. In the game of death he was the victor because he would not admit defeat. And part of the ritual of the bullring demanded this type of courage and will from its high priests. In killing the bull, the torero mastered his own fears, conquered his own weaknesses, and demonstrated his contempt for the power of death. Further, his courage made available to the devotees of the cult the shared immortality brought about by the power of courage over death. This contempt for the power of death was part of Hemingway's religion of death, for a man could prove himself a man only by demonstrating his scorn and contempt for it.

In "The Capital of the World" the victory of courage over death is again illustrated. Challenged by Enrique, a dishwasher at the Pension Luarca, to prove his courage, Paco, a boy waiter, agreed to a simulated bullfight. Enrique played the role of the bull by tying razor sharp knives onto the legs of a chair and using the knives as the bull's horns. By stepping several inches too far into Enrique's rush, the boy suffered death but also won victory. For he not only conquered

his own fear, as he felt he would, but also died with his illusion intact--a type of death that Hemingway himself said he would like to die.⁹

Contrapuntal to the theme of Paco's victory is the theme of defeat in the person of the cowardly bullfighter. Just as Paco reveals what a man can become when he conquers fear, so does the cowardly matador in the same story reveal what a man can become when he is a victim of fear. The cult of the bullring demanded courage even in the face of death, but a terrible cogida had drained the courage from the cowardly bullfighter, and he was left with his own impotence--spiritual and physical. He was even unsuccessful in his attempt to seduce the sister of Paco. His lack of courage brought only her contempt. Thus in the story we see the paradox of a man alive who is truly dead and a man dead who is truly alive because he has bought for himself immortality through courage.

In his nonfiction Hemingway revealed that he was aware of the religious overtones in his writing. That he was aware

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Carlos Baker, Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story (New York: Scribner's, 1969), 552.

of the significance of the San Fermin Festival can be seen in the "Pamplona Letter," the transatlantic review, 11 (October, 1924), 301. "San Fermin [wrote Hemingway] is the local deity in the system of idolatry which the Spaniards substitute for Christianity. San Fermin, looking very much like Buddha, is carried through the streets at odd moments during the Feria."¹⁰

That Hemingway's preoccupation with the bullring extended even to his other novels can be seen in his sea novel The Old Man and the Sea. Here Santiago is portrayed as a matador of marlins. The old man's fight with the great fish progresses like a bullfight. Santiago is a member of the cuadrilla as he attempts to find out what kind of fish he has on the line. He is a picador as he sets the hook. He is a banderillero when he lashes the two oars across the boat to increase the drag, and, finally, he is a matador when he maneuvers the fish for the kill.¹¹

Just as there are only a few great matadors, so few that they are as rare as a true messiah, there are only a few great

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R. O. Stephens, Hemingway's Nonfiction: The Public Voice (Chapel Hill: Univ. of N. C. Press, 1968), 243.

¹¹

R. O. Stephens, "Hemingway's Old Man and the Iceberg," Modern Fiction Studies, VII (1961-2), 296.

fishermen and Santiago is one of them. The boy tells Santiago, "There are many good fishermen and some great ones. But there is only you."¹²

Unlike Paco in "Capital of the World" who possesses courage but lacks the skill to use it and steps two inches too far into the path of the knives, Santiago, the matador of the sea, is exact and says of his fishing lines: ". . . I had rather be exact. Then when luck comes you are ready" (p. 32).

For the matador of the sea or the matador of the ring the ritual must be performed in the correct way or the reward is death. But ritual performed in the correct way in the presence of death brings immortality.

So with Santiago there is a right way and a wrong way, and the rightness is even more important than winning. If one loses in the right way, he is still a winner, but if he wins in the wrong way he is a loser.

Just as Santiago gains a moral victory over defeat, so does Pedro Romero gain a moral victory even though he is defeated by Cohn. Dying is not important. It is how one lives

¹² Ernest Hemingway, The Old Man and the Sea (New York: Scribner's, 1952), 23. Subsequent references are to this edition and are parenthesized within the text.

that is important to the cult of the bullring. Dying does not bring defeat. Living without courage will.

Hemingway's bullfighting treatise, Death in the Afternoon, celebrates the moment of death just as does his sea novel, The Old Man and the Sea. In Death in the Afternoon, Hemingway says "the beauty of the moment of killing is that flash when . . . the sword goes all the way in, the man leaning after it."¹³ In The Old Man and the Sea he describes the killing of the great fish: "He felt the iron go in and he leaned on it and drove it further and then pushed all his weight after it" (pp. 103-4). The cult of the bullring is a religion of death, and it is in the moment of death that the devotee finds immortality.

The decreasing circles of the great fish are similar to the ritual of the faena in the bullring. Just as the great fish's circles become smaller and smaller until he is made to pass by the old man so he can make the kill, so does the matador bring the bull in closer and closer with the muleta until the kill can be made.¹⁴

¹³ Ernest Hemingway, Death in the Afternoon (New York: Scribner's, 1932), 247. Subsequent references are to this edition and are parenthesized within the text.

¹⁴ Sylvester Bickford, "Hemingway's Extended Vision: The Old Man and the Sea," PMLA, LXXXI (1966), 133.

Moreover, the fin of the great fish was pointed toward Santiago's chest just as the old man's lance was pointed toward the fish's heart. Thus the two antagonists remain poised--fin to chest and lance to heart. The similarity is obvious when one recalls that in the bullring the matador brings his sword to point toward the heart of the bull, and the bull brings his horns to point toward the matador's chest--sword to heart and horn to chest.¹⁵

Unlike the minor players in the cult of the bullring, the priest-kings, the matadors, think of themselves as immortal. So does Santiago who looks upon himself as immortal. As he attempts to bring the great fish alongside the boat, the old man tells himself, "You're good for ever" (p. 92). This statement is analagous to Romero's in The Sun Also Rises that he "is never going to die" (p. 186).

The true believer is also oblivious to pain. He is made so by courage. "Pain does not matter to a man," says the old fisherman of the raw wounds on his right hand (p. 84). In Death in the Afternoon Maera drives on the bull in spite of his dislocated right wrist. When his sword handler questions him about his continuing the fight, Maera replies, "Fuck the wrist" (p. 80).

¹⁵Ibid.

That the priests of the bullring kill what they love is not so strange if one recalls what Hemingway said above about being in rebellion against death. Santiago says of the great fish: "Fish . . . I love you and respect you very much. But I will kill you before this day ends" (p. 54). One will recall that in The Sun Also Rises when Brett asks, "You kill your friends?," Pedro Romero replies, "Always" (p. 186).

Just as there are good bulls there are cowardly bulls, and their counterpart in The Old Man and the Sea is the galanos. Unlike the mako shark which followed the blood trail unerringly to the great fish, the galanos were excited and in their stupidity and excitement lost the scent. Unlike the beautiful mako shark with "his back as blue as a sword fish's and his belly . . . silver and his hide smooth and handsome," the galanos "were hateful sharks, scavengers as well as killers . . ." (p. 108).

The old man was humiliated by the galanos because they were unpredictable. One might say that the old man's fight with the galanos could not be artistic as the faena of death should be because the antagonist was a cowardly one. A cowardly bull is difficult to fight because he will not charge the picador more than once if he receives any punishment.

Consequently, he enters the third part of the fight with his tempo intact and not slowed as in the case of a brave bull. Furthermore, one can never tell when a cowardly bull will charge. On this type of bull, as Hemingway notes in Death in the Afternoon, brilliance on the part of the matador is impossible (p. 145).

The dentuso, the great mako shark, is one of the great bulls of the sea. Like the great fighting bulls, he knows no fear. And when he scents blood, his instinct infallibly guides him to his prey. Like the great bullfighter, El Gallo of Death in the Afternoon, the old man recognizes that only his intelligence has enabled him to defeat the great bull of the sea. "The dentuso is cruel and able and strong and intelligent. But I was more intelligent than he was," says the old man (p. 103). Hemingway says in Death in the Afternoon, "A really brave fighting bull is afraid of nothing on earth," and "A true fighting bull fears nothing" (p. 109). In The Old Man and the Sea, the dentuso is no ordinary shark just as the brave bull is no ordinary bull. Santiago recognizes that nobility when he says of the dentuso, "He is beautiful and noble and knows no fear of anything" (p. 106). This remark is reminiscent of the great fighting bulls described by Hemingway in Death in the Afternoon: "The best of the fighting bulls have a quality called nobility

by the Spanish. . ." (p. 113). The great mako shark is a pure killer, a concept that Hemingway admires and carries over in his bullfighting works, especially Death in the Afternoon. He says, "A great killer must love to kill. . . . He must have a sense of honor and glory beyond the common bullfighter. And he must take pleasure in killing, not simply as a trick, but he must take a spiritual enjoyment out of the moment of killing" (p. 232). The great killer, whether man or shark, is accorded Hemingway's respect and admiration. It is the great killer among men who rises above death because it is he who shares in the ecstasy of death. Among men the greatest killer is the great matador--the high priest of the cult of the bullring.

We have seen how the devotees of the cult of the bullring are set apart by such phenomena as the wounding motif and code language. Brett Ashley, too, takes on cult symbolism as the pagan priestess figure. Further signs of the uniqueness of the cult are brought out by the symbolic union of man and bull, the collective neurosis of the cult, and the appearance of Cohn as the pharmakos archetype. The religious ramifications of the cult take on more import when the bullring becomes a site for religious worship, when the Holy Communion archetype appears, and when the matador is viewed as the high priest of the bullring. The theme of the domination of death through courage is seen not

only in the bullfighting works but also in their analogue,
The Old Man and the Sea. Thus the theme of cult worship
 forms a salient part in the corpus of Hemingway's works.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION AND POINTS FORWARD

In Hemingway's works one can see how a mind attuned to death and primitivism found its home in the cult of the bullring--a cult of death worship that forms an integral part of the Hemingway mystique and character. In using the archetypal motifs that he felt would strike a common chord in human experience, Hemingway perhaps hit upon his elusive quarry--a prose of the fifth dimension.

However, neither death, primitivism, nor the bull cult--the logical extension of Hemingway's obsession with death and primitivism--would have been major factors in his writing if it had not been for his wounding in Italy. If not for that wounding and its subsequent traumatic manifestation, the chances are that he would never have drawn upon those archetypes of death and primitivism that have given his prose its universal qualities, for his regressive primitivization of ritual and language was based upon that trauma.

The enduring achievement of Hemingway, however, does not rest upon his reputation as a psychological case study, but rather upon his reputation as an artist of consummate skill and raw power. By transforming neurosis into art, he was able to

make out of his private fears a language that rose above the personal to the universal. His plumbing of the depths of the collective unconscious resulted in his drawing upon archetypal motifs that would sound the wellsprings of human experience and evoke a universal response from the human heart.

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